

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DHA-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

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FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4780

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, SHUM, RP

SUBJECT: HUMAN RIGHTS DEVELOPMENTS

REF: MANILA 13597

1. MORE DETAINEES RELEASED. ON SEPTEMBER 6, PRESIDENT MARCOS ORDERED THE RELEASE OF 500 ADDITIONAL DETAINEES FROM REHABILITATION CENTERS AROUND THE COUNTRY. MANILA PRESS REPORTED 40 OF THESE WERE RELEASED FROM CAMP CRAME SAME DAY AS ANNOUNCEMENT. TIMES JOURNAL LISTED NAMES OF 38 OF THE 40, CHARACTERIZING THEM AS PERSONS "WHO ALLEGEDLY COMMITTED CRIMES AGAINST PERSONS AND PROPERTY." DAILY EXPRESS REPORTED PROCESSING OF RELEASES EXPECTED TO BE COMPLETED ON OR BEFORE SEPTEMBER 21 ANNIVERSARY OF MARTIAL LAW.

2. ABAD SANTOS CRITICIZES MILITARY TRIBUNAL DELAYS. IN RELATED DEVELOPMENT, ALL MORNING DAILIES RAN FRONT PAGE ACCOUNTS SEPTEMBER 6 OF LETTER JUSTICE SECRETARY ABAD SANTOS SENT TO JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL DIMAYA CRITICIZING DELAY IN HANDLING CASES OF MILITARY DETAINEES. THE LETTER REPORTEDLY WAS PROMPTED BY COMPLAINT OF WIFE OF FARMER DETAINED SINCE 1973 FOR ALLEGEDLY FATALLY SHOOTING A BARRIO CAPTAIN. PORTION OF ABAD SANTOS' LETTER, AS REPRODUCED IN THE PRESS, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SAID, "SURELY IT DOES NOT SPEAK WELL OF THE NEW IMAGE OF THE MILITARY UNDER THE NEW SOCIETY THAT CASES OF PRO- LONGED DETENTION OF ACCUSED PERSONS, WHO AFTER ALL ENJOY A CONSTITUTIONAL PRESUMPTION OF INNOCENCE, SHOULD CONTINUE TO BE BROUGHT TO LIGHT WITH DISMAYING REGULARITY."

3. COMMENT: (A) LATEST ORDER BRINGS TO 2,000 THE NUMBER OF

CIVILIAN DETAINEES ANNOUNCED RELEASED SINCE LATE JUNE.
WHILE WE STILL LACK AN AUTHORITATIVE READING, OUR BEST
ESTIMATE IS THAT PREPONDERANCE OF THESE RELEASES FALLS
INTO THE COMMON CRIMINAL VICE "POLITICAL PRISONER" CATEGORY.
(B) ABAD SANTOS' PROPENSITY FOR GRABBING HEADLINES, PARTI-
CULARLY REGARDING MILITARY BASES ISSUES, IS WELL KNOWN.
IN THIS CASE PUBLICITY ACCORDED HIS LETTER IS MILDLY
ENCOURAGING, SINCE IT IS ANOTHER INDICATION THAT THE
GOP AND MANILA PRESS ARE NOW FOCUSING MORE KEENLY ON
HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE.
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Message Attributes

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